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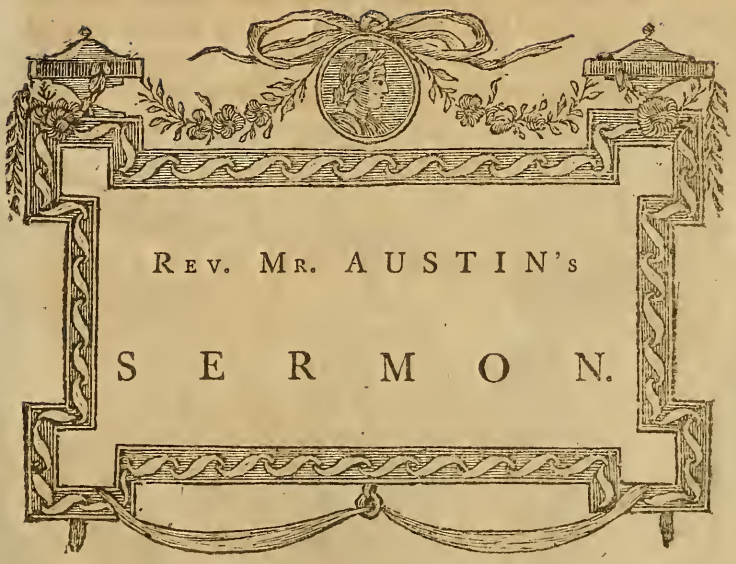

REV. MR. AUSTIN'S

SERMON.

1794

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THE MOST PROMISING LIFE, AND DEATH, CLOSELY CONNECTED.

A

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT

WORCESTER,

NOVEMBER 4th, MDCCXCII,

THE SABBATH SUBSEQUENT TO THE DEATH AND INTERMENT OF

Miss HANNAH BLAIR,

WHO DIED OF THE SMALL POX.

By SAMUEL AUSTIN, A. M.
PASTOR OF A CHURCH IN *WORCESTER.*

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MDCCXCIV.

A

SERMON.

JOHN xix. 41.

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new ſepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

THIS obſervation, as you will probably remember, ſtands in connexion with the hiſtory, which the Evangeliſt has given us, of the crucifixion of our divine Redeemer. The leading characters among the Jews having conſpired to accompliſh the deſtruction of the SON of GOD, laid violent hands upon him, in one of his retirements, and dragged him forcibly to the tribunal of their Roman Governour; alledging, that he was a blaſphemer, and was traitorouſly proſecuting an intereſt againſt Cæſar. Having obtained, not by ſupporting their allegations, but by cabal and clamour, leave

leave of this magiſtrate to put him to death, they led him forth to a particular place, probably without the walls of Jeruſalem, where they crucified him. Now, it was ſo ordered by infinite wiſdom, that in this place there was a garden, and in this garden a new ſepulchre, and not only a new ſepulchre, but, as mentioned in the 17th verſe, a place, called the place of a ſkull, or, in the Hebrew, Golgotha. A ſtrange combination, you will ſay, indeed; a garden, a ſepulchre, and Golgotha, together. A garden, probably filled with ſome of the richeſt productions of the ground, furniſhing numerous delicious fruits, adorned with gay and odoriferous flowers, and perhaps heightened into the greateſt delightfulneſs by the melodious ſongs of birds:—A ſepulchre; a dreary, dark manſion, for coffins, and winding ſheets, and human corpſes, to lie and corrupt in:—And the place of a ſkull; numerous habitations of the dead. "It is impoſſible!" you may ſay. "No man, or body of men, in ſo polite and ſplendid a city as Jeruſalem, could be poſſeſſed of ſuch a taſte, as to permit ſo ſtrange a combination. We do not make our gardens our burying grounds. The handſome gardens of the wealthy are never ſpoiled by graves. A garden is deſigned for fruitfulneſs, beauty, and delight. And ſhall ſepulchres be put in them?" I cannot give you a particular deſcription of this garden; nor is it my province to undertake to vindicate the propriety of this combination, by ſentiments of taſte; nor will I attempt to aſſign to you the preciſe reaſons, either in the views of men, or in the purpoſes of GOD, why it came to be ſo. But is there not, to the ſerious obſerving mind, weighty inſtruction addreſſed

dreſſed to us in all objects? In the ſun, moon, and planets; in the earth, air, winds, ſeas, lightning and thunder, foreſts, mountains, cities, farms, gardens, and burying grounds; in the Sabbath, in the ſanctuary, and in the Bible, in its precepts, promiſes, threatenings, and ſketches of hiſtory, is there not intereſting and weighty inſtruction? And may it not be, that there is ſome valuable inſtruction, even about the garden, the ſepulchre, and Golgotha, of which our text ſpeaks? The whole ſcene of our LORD's mediatorial work was inſtructive. And why might not the very circumſtances of his burial have been deſigned, in infinite wiſdom, to be monitorial and emblematical of ſomething intereſting reſpecting the ſtate of this world, with which CHRIST, as a ſufferer, ſtood connected? And why may not the moral ſentiment of theſe circumſtances be, that as the ſcene of CHRIST's greateſt work, as the atonement and example of the world, was in a garden, in which was a ſepulchre and Golgotha; ſo, in the garden of GOD's providence and bounty, in which we are acting and ſuffering, there is a ſepulchre and Golgotha? Or, in other words, the grave is intimately and cloſely connected with the moſt flattering circumſtances, as well as with the greateſt ſufferings, which human life can admit?

I ſhall take leave, in this diſcourſe, to make ſome obſervations, illuſtrative of this general idea, and cloſe with ſome inferences, and an application of the ſubject.

There are many things, in the ſtate of this world, which may be fitly repreſented by a garden. Ordinarily, a garden has the moſt exuberant ſoil. Its productions

ductions are highly valuable; and, if we ſuppoſe ſuch an one as the opulent in old countries poſſeſs, it is covered with fruits of a moſt delicious kind, and ornamented with flowers of every deſcription and hue. A ſtriking emblem, it muſt be acknowledged, of the fair ſide of the picture of human life. Sometimes we are favoured with pleaſing circumſtances, and promiſing cheering proſpects. We are as in a diverſified fine garden. In childhood, we are advancing in bodily ſtature and ſtrength, in the exerciſe and extent of our reaſoning faculties, in improvements in learning, and have commonly before us the opening proſpects of manhood and proſperous life. Perhaps our connexions are ſuch as point our views forward, even at this period, to ſingular worldly advantages. In youth, we find ourſelves ſtill nearer theſe pleaſing flattering objects. Our nerves are ſtrung. Our bodily organs perform their functions, with eaſe and vigour. Imagination is on the wing, and buſily employed in picturing a thouſand future ſcenes of proſperity and pleaſure. We are introduced into the gay and airy intercourſe of the world. We begin to form new, and, as we flatter ourſelves, happy connexions. In ſhort, we are beginning the pleaſing buſineſs of making our way in the world; and figuring in its enjoyments, honours, and riches. But little darkneſs and perplexity encumber the mind. All before it is bright and charming. Perhaps the youth, whoſe occupation is agriculture, is looking forward, with ardour and fond anticipation, to his fancied fine farm, his large barns, his numerous thriving cattle, and plenteous yearly crops of grain. He almoſt fancies himſelf on

this

this fine farm, poſſeſſed of all this property, its lord and owner; and imagines himſelf as in a noble garden, where every thing is plentiful and pleaſing. The apprentice is elated with the delightful idea of his future proſperity and importance, at a time, in which he ſhall be director of his own buſineſs; when he ſhall be maſter in *his* turn; when he ſhall ſay to one, Go, and he will go; and to another, Come, and he will come; when he ſhall be famed, far and wide, for his dexterity in his buſineſs, and for the finiſhed manner in which his work ſhall be done. The clerk behind the counter is preparing himſelf, as he almoſt rapturouſly imagines, to act at the head of a vaſt ſcale of trade; when he ſhall be ſurrounded with all kinds of valuable commodities, and have the management of a great property; when, like Solomon, he ſhall be able "to make himſelf gardens and orchards, and gather to himſelf ſilver and gold, and the peculiar treaſure of kings and the provinces." The young ſcholar enjoys, at preſent, the agreeable opportunity of informing his mind, and treaſuring up valuable knowledge in ſeveral arts and ſciences, and has the opportunity of forming deſirable literary acquaintances, and looks forward to the openings and intercourſe of life, with engagedneſs. He perhaps ſooths himſelf with the idea, that he has before him the firſt honours and ampleſt emoluments, which the world has to beſtow. And, in the ſanguine expectation of his future proſperity, the whole creation ſeems to ſmile upon him. When we ſtep on the theatre of active life, in manhood, we often view ourſelves beginning the career of this our worldly proſperity and glory. You

will

will obſerve that I am here ſpeaking of the natural feelings of natural men. We take hold of buſineſs, perhaps, as though we deſigned ſomething uncommon. The new married couple, warmed with ſentiments of mutual affection, and entering on the journey of domeſtick life together, often ſee, or think they ſee, joy ſparkling in their cup. They taſte a little of that worldly felicity which they think will be always increaſing. New ſettlements in the world, new circumſtances, new connexions, and new conſequent enjoyments, ſeem to give every thing an air of delightfulneſs. In more advanced years, and in middle age, there are ſometimes, to human views and feelings, agreeable circumſtances and grateful proſpects. Children may be growing up under your eyes as parents. They may be ingenious, well behaved, and promiſing. Yea, it is poſſible they may be pious. For there are ſome of this deſcription. You may ſee them riſing into life, and bidding exceedingly fair. Your own worldly condition may be advancing. Your health may be firm. Your tables may be covered with plenty, and want may be a ſtranger to your doors. Even old age has alſo ſometimes its garden-like circumſtances. You may have been proſpered in the world, ſo as to be deſtitute of ſcarce any bleſſing of Providence. You may ſee your old age renewed in your children. You may ſee them growing in reputation, in uſefulneſs, and even goodneſs. You may feel in your boſoms ſome of the grateful emotions, which good old Jacob felt, when he ſaid, "It is enough; Joſeph my ſon is yet alive."

Theſe

Theſe are ſome of the real or apparent good things, which, in the bounty of Divine Providence, are before the children of men; and which, as they addreſs human feelings, may be fitly repreſented by a garden. But——"in the garden there was a ſepulchre, in which never man was yet laid." So, in the vaſt garden of human hopes, proſpects, purſuits, and divine bounties, there is a ſepulchre; yea, ten thouſand ſepulchres, diſmal retirements, ready to receive us into their cold embrace. Death, in unnumbered forms, walks every where. He has a kind of omnipreſence in this very garden. There is no tree, nor ſhrub, nor flower, where he doth not lurk. So ſure as we are in the garden, ſo ſure we are cloſe by a ſepulchre. "As the LORD liveth," ſaid David, "there is but a ſtep between me and death." "Rejoice, O young man," ſays the royal preacher, "in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all theſe things, GOD will bring thee into judgment. "And the voice," ſays the Prophet, "ſaid unto me, Cry; and I ſaid, What ſhall I cry? All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field. The graſs withereth, the flower fadeth; becauſe the ſpirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: Surely the people is graſs." In the book of Job, we have numerous ſtriking expreſſions to this import. "For we are but of yeſterday, and know nothing, becauſe our days upon earth are a ſhadow. Man, that is born of a woman, is of few days. He cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth alſo as a ſhadow, and continueth not.

I have ſaid to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my ſiſter. One dieth in his full ſtrength, being wholly at eaſe and quiet, his breaſts are full of milk, and his bones are moiſtened with marrow. And another dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, and never eateth with pleaſure; they ſhall lie down alike in the duſt, and the worms ſhall cover them." Death ſeems to be walking cloſe by us, let our condition in life be what it will; be it ever ſo brilliant, pleaſing, and proſperous. To adhere to the expreſſion in the text, there are ſepulchres all around us; and not only thoſe in which the dead lie corrupting, but thoſe in which never man yet laid, prepared to receive us, as the ſepulchre in the garden was prepared to receive the body of CHRIST. In what numberleſs inſtances are the beſt human proſpects totally obſcured by death, as in a moment! How often do parents find that there are ſepulchres, even for the babes, who are the objects of their fondeſt careſſes! How often do the dreams of the young, blooming and gay, vaniſh, as in a moment, in ſome ſudden ſtroke of mortality! In numerous inſtances, the mind has been filled with viſions of expected proſperity, figure, and worldly joy, while the feet were ſtepping into the grave. The moſt agreeable connexions, pointing forward to the beſt worldly enjoyments, have often been diſſolved, by death, almoſt as ſoon as formed. Multitudes of children, who were ſprightly and promiſing, who were as olive plants around the tables of their parents, have found a ſepulchre, before reaſon had thrown open its faireſt bloſſoms. How many youth, even while the world was laviſhing its favours

on

on them, while every thing ſeemed to put on the faireſt appearance, and their minds were feaſting on ſcenes of future proſperity and bliſs, have been ſtopped ſhort in their career, and exchanged the intoxicating ſhadows of time for the awful realities of eternity! Death rides on the foaming billows. It ſtands on the point of the ſpear in the field of battle. It is wrapt up in the lightning. It moves in the wind. It walks among a thouſand of thoſe events, which we denominate diſaſters. It is a gueſt in all our houſes. And there is no place, where human beings exiſt, but it finds its way. The ſtudent hath been taken from his books and worldly proſpects, by this deſtroyer of the human race. Multitudes, who have juſt entered on the career of active buſineſs, have, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, ſhut up their ſhops, and lain down in the duſt, in the grave, the houſe appointed for all living. Often, the marriage union hath ſcarcely been formed, and the tender affectionate intercourſe of domeſtick life entered upon, when the united couple have found a ſepulchre in their path, and taken a ſolemn, an unexpected, and, perhaps, everlaſting leave of each other. Thus, "Duſt thou art, and unto duſt ſhalt thou return," is a ſentence found in every page of the book of Providence, and cloſely attached to every connexion, condition, and enjoyment, of human life; to old age, youth, and childhood; to the male, and to the female; as much to the rich as to the poor, to the maſter as to his ſervant. "There is no diſcharge in this war:" "For, it is appointed unto all men once to die; and after death, the judgment." Even the very means, which are adopted to preſerve

life,

life, often lead directly down to the chambers of death. Hence the pathetick exclamation, "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"

I shall now beg leave to lead your minds to some practical use of what has been said, in a few inferences, and an application.

1. If death is so intimately, so nearly allied, to every thing in this world, even to the most flattering circumstances of it, then, certainly, we must be the subjects of the most melancholy poverty, if we have no better enjoyments, and have no higher interests, than this world has to bestow. Emptiness is written upon every thing below the sun. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." Nothing is permanent. Not the least security is there attached to any worldly enjoyment or alliance. The best temporal circumstances, the finest prospects, the most vigorous health, the nearest and most established connexions, form no barrier against that most formidable assailant of man, the king of terrors. And when we become his prey, we are entirely stripped of every thing, to which worldly affection cleaves, as much as the meanest, most suffering, and most friendless creature, that moves upon the face of the globe. With respect to every thing, which we now idolatrously cares, we all shall shortly be as poor as total everlasting poverty can make us. Then, certainly, the shipwrecked, starving mariner, doth not need something to refresh his exhausted nature, to invigorate his languid limbs, and prolong the feeble remains of life, more, than we need a better inheritance, diviner consolations, and a higher happi-

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pineſs, than this world has to beſtow. And the poor ſailor, driven about on the ſhattered fragments of his broken veſſel, in the midſt of a tumultuous ocean, may with as much propriety glory in his diſmal, cheerleſs ſituation, as ſinners, who have no ſubjection of heart to GOD, no vital union to the overtures of the goſpel, nor, conſequently, any intereſt in its ſalvation, can glory, or ſatisfactorily reſt, in the tranſitory objects and circumſtances of this dying world. Hence ſinners, who, in the pride of their hearts, are elated with wordly poſſeſſions or diſtinctions, as though they were increaſed in goods and had need of nothing, are really in a ſimilar ſituation with the mad man, who imagines himſelf an Emperor, and gives out orders, as having the ſtrength, and wealth, of a powerful empire at his command, while, in fact, the poor creature is ſhut up in bedlam.

2. From what has been ſaid, we may learn the inexpreſſible value of real perſonal religion. It is vital perſonal religion only, conſiſting in a holy conformity of heart to the character, government, and goſpel of GOD, through JESUS CHRIST, wrought and cheriſhed in the ſoul, by the efficient operation of the SPIRIT of GOD, which can make that cloſe connexion, which there is between the grave and every thing in this world, ſit eaſy upon our minds. And it is this only, which can place us in a right condition, with reſpect to all preſent as well as future objects. It is this only, which can furniſh us with a preparedneſs to uſe the things of this world, in their proper connexion with the grave and eternity. It is this only, which can enable us to contemplate and realize habitually how

near

near the ſepulchre lies to us, with inward peace. It is this only, which can ſupport our hearts, and make us completely ſerene, when we are actually meeting death. And it is this only, through grace, which can introduce us to that ſtate of immortal life and bleſſedneſs, which lies beyond the grave. The real chriſtian is the only perſon, who can converſe with death becomingly. He is the only perſon, with reſpect to whom its ſting is taken away. He only is in a ſituation to draw conſolation from thoſe things, which are the ſources of inexpreſſible uneaſineſs to worldly men. O, then, of what unutterable worth and importance is genuine piety! a heart ſubdued into a holy conformity to the will and ſervice of GOD! Is not this, emphatically, the one thing needful? Is it not comprehenſive of all that is good and lovely? Is it not that wiſdom, deſcribed in ſuch glowing language by king Solomon, "which is more precious than rubies, the merchandiſe of which is better than the merchandiſe of ſilver, and the gain thereof than fine gold;" and of which he ſays, "Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand, riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her?" How infinitely deſirable, then, that we be all truly, and experimentally, the ſubjects of it! Are not all, who are deſtitute of this beſt, this only valuable poſſeſſion, objects of the deepeſt commiſeration? And is it ſtrange, that the benevolence of ſo good a man as St. Paul expreſſed itſelf, towards his abandoned unbelieving countrymen, in ſuch lan-

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guage as this; "I ſay the truth in CHRIST, I lie not, my conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs in the HOLY GHOST, that I have great heavineſs and continual ſorrow in my heart. For I could wiſh that I were accurſed from CHRIST, for my brethren, my kinſmen according to the fleſh." Rom. ix. 1, 2, 3.

3. Our ſubject may lead us to ſee with how much ſuperiority to the world, in point of affection and ſolicitude, we ſhould live in it. To hold the things of the world, with a tenacious, idolatrous fondneſs, or to be greatly anxious about them, ſeems to be marked, by our ſubject, as not only criminal, but greatly abſurd and fooliſh. Were a perſon in poſſeſſion, really and literally, of the fineſt garden, with every other correſponding agreeable circumſtance of life; yet, if he had a ſepulchre in that garden, and knew for certain that he ſhould be very ſoon buried in it, and that his death, for ought he knew, might be the very next moment, and that, whenever it came, it would ſeparate him forever from all the objects now ſurrounding him, and preſent his immortal ſpirit, at once, before the bar of GOD, to ſuſtain an allotment, inexpreſſibly glorious or dreadful, for an eternity; if he felt and acted in the leaſt degree becoming a reaſonable nature, could it be expected that his thoughts, his concern, or affections, would be taken up with flowers, or fruits, or any thing but his duty, the grave, and eternity? Juſt ſo ſhould we all wear the world as a looſe garment, which, without any diſcompoſure, and at any moment, we can throw off. It behoveth us to feel, that we have here no continuing city, and to maintain, in the fear of GOD, a conſtant

ſtant ſelf-denial, an abſtraction, in our views and affections, from the luſts of the world, and to ſuffer no inferiour attachment or purſuit, to interrupt, for the ſhorteſt period, a humble, fervent breathing after GOD, and the interminable glories of his kingdom. Thus Prophets, Apoſtles, and Saints have lived, ſetting us an example. "While," ſays St. Paul, "we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen; for the things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are eternal."

Suffer me now to make an application of this ſubject to ſeveral ſorts of perſons.

Firſt, to the aged. Thoſe who are far advanced in life have the greateſt reaſon to lay this intereſting ſubject to heart. Every thing about them ſeems to enforce the preſſing importance of their being really prepared to leave the world. Is it not aſtoniſhing, my aged friends, that you have walked ſo long in the regions of death, and are yet living? Is it not ſtrange, that you have not been laid in your ſepulchres, long before this time? You can hardly, then, be now inſenſible, that your end is at hand, that your ſands are almoſt run, and that, with reſpect to you, emphatically, "the Judge ſtandeth at the door." Your gray hairs, your tottering, decaying frames, your growing incapacities, tell you loudly, and call upon you urgently to feel, that, though you are ſtill in the garden of Divine Providence, in that garden there certainly is a ſepulchre. You are abſolutely on the confines of the eternal world. "Awake, then, to righteouſneſs, and ſin not." Let not the laſt ſands of life drop heedleſsly.

heedleſsly. If any of you have lived ſo long, without a penitent, ſaving return to GOD, through JESUS CHRIST, certainly it is time to conſider your awfully guilty, and alarming ſituation. The longer we live, the heavier, undoubtedly, will be our damnation, if we die unconverted. Becauſe, to live in an unconverted ſtate, is to live in total ſlavery to ſin; it is acting entirely in oppoſition to the grace of the goſpel; and is, of courſe, in every point of view, obnoxious to the curſe of GOD's violated law. Take heed, then, leſt a promiſe being left, ſome of you ſhould ſeem to fall ſhort of it. You have but a very few precious moments left. O turn to the ſtrong hold, ye priſoners of hope, or, be aſſured, you will ſhortly be priſoners of deſpair!

Let thoſe who are in middle life remember, that, with reſpect to them alſo, in the garden there is a ſepulchre. Be your worldly circumſtances ever ſo flattering; or your vigour, and health of body, ever ſo great; be aſſured, that but a few moments ſeparate between you, and the tribunal of the infinite BEING, whom you have flagrantly offended, and whoſe prerogative it yet is, to diſpoſe of you forever. Laying this, feelingly and deeply, to heart, be perſuaded to look ſolemnly into your ſpiritual ſtate, and bring yourſelves, with reſpect to your governing views and attachments, to the ſtandard of GOD's unalterable word. Dread the fatal ſnare of ſelf-deception. Let the religion of the goſpel take poſſeſſion of your hearts, and your families. Let all your feelings be ſubjected to its holy precepts; and let it be your higheſt, your conſtant concern, to be found, and to

 have

have your children found, in CHRIST. Muſt not your feelings, my friends, revolt, with horror, from the thought of dying the adverſaries of GOD, and of being acceſſary, by your rejection of the truth, by impure example, and ſelfiſh neglect, to the endleſs perdition of thoſe committed, in providence, to your particular charge? But remember, that you cannot live in diſobedience to the goſpel of CHRIST, without contributing, as far as your perſonal influence can go, to the ſinking of others, eſpecially of your houſeholds, into the ſame irretrievable ruin, into which you, if impenitent ſinners, are plunging.

Let young newly married perſons remember, that, in their garden, there is a ſepulchre. And let them begin, and proſecute, their united journey, under the proper influence of this idea. Is it not a matter of deep lamentation, that ſo many young perſons ſhould commence their family ſtate, without GOD, without prayer, without any cordial reſpect to the ſolemnities and duties of religion? It would ſeem as if they were bereft of all realizing apprehenſion, how near they are to the bar of GOD. O how do we proſtitute the character of reaſonable creatures! GOD is the ſource of being, and the ſum of excellence. He is all in all. And yet many of us live as though there were no GOD. Every relation ſhould, in a wiſe reference to eternal ſcenes, be exalted and ſweetened by religious affection. Every family ſhould be a nurſery of piety, and, in its ſpiritual intercourſe, reſemble the fellowſhip of heaven. Otherwiſe, it is only an aſſociation of guilt.

Let

Let the youth of this congregation be taught, by our ſubject, the infinite importance of their being truly religious, in the golden moments of their lives. My heart is in pain for you, my dear young friends. The moſt of you are heedleſs, thoughtleſs, and given up to every kind of youthful vanity. Some of you are even openly vicious and profane. You are abandoned to wickedneſs, even while GOD is calling you to duty, to purity, and eternal joy, by a voice louder than thunder, in his providence and word. But permit me to remind you, that, even in the garden of youthful ſports, there are many ſepulchres. Be aſſured, that you are frolicking, that you are taking GOD's holy name in vain, that you are breaking the Sabbath, that you are wallowing in the deteſted filth of laſciviouſneſs, and wantoning in pride, whenever you are guilty of thoſe ſins, on the very borders of the grave, on the confines of a boundleſs eternity.

Let children remember, that there are ſepulchres before them. O children, remember, you muſt die, and may die very ſoon. Conſider, what you have often been told, that you are ſinners againſt GOD; and that you cannot be ſaved, but by believing in the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Come, then, now, give your hearts to CHRIST. Come, be the gentle, dutiful lambs of his flock.

All the ſolemn truths of this ſubject are enforced, by ſeveral recent inſtances of mortality; by the very conſiderable number of deaths, which have taken place this ſeaſon, in conſequence of the ſpread of an infectious diſeaſe; and more immediately, by that affecting inſtance of the uncertainty of human life, which has

has been publickly mentioned this day. This event ſeems to bring home to our feelings the ideas of our ſubject. "There was a garden, and in the garden a ſepulchre." What place is there, which is not Golgotha, the place of a ſkull? A young perſon, in the bloom of health, with an excellent conſtitution, with all the proſpects, which youth, in ſuch circumſtances, could preſent, is hereby, in an unexpected, and very moving manner, ſeparated from her parents, her family connexions, her acquaintance, from this houſe of worſhip, and from all ſublunary things, into the vaſt world of ſpirits. How ſudden and how great the change! How ſolemn the circumſtances! How ſpeaking the providence! It can ſcarcely be otherways, but that we ſhould feel a ſympathetick intereſt in the afflictions of the bereaved parents, brethren, ſiſters, and friends, who, among other painful ſtruggles, were, the moſt of them, denied the conſolation of being with her, in her expiring moments. We wiſh them a ſanctified improvement of this unexpected bereavement. We requeſt for them the ſupports and conſolations of the HOLY SPIRIT, which are neither few nor ſmall. We hope that the awakening providence will do them good forever; that they will be bowed to the divine ſovereignty in this, as in all other things; and that the ſolemn ſcene, though, for the preſent, it be not joyous, but grievous, may work out for them a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory.

Before we conclude, I muſt be allowed to expreſs my earneſt wiſh, that the younger part of my people, would lay this event ſeriouſly to heart. It reiterates the remonſtrances of everlaſting truth. I have no more

more opportunity to addreſs the deceaſed; but to you, my young friends, I have opportunity to ſpeak; and ſhall it not be improved? That you are ſo conſtantly expoſed to the arreſts of death, is a very ſerious conſideration. And that you ſhould, generally, be ſo hardened and unmoved, reſpecting it, is one of the greateſt poſſible evils. Conſider, I beſeech you, that, though the vigour and activity of youth may ſeem to place you in the garden of worldly proſpects, in that very garden there is a ſepulchre. Remember, that your life is a vapour, which continueth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away; that GOD will aſſuredly bring you into judgment; and that, therefore, the whole of your ſtruggle againſt duty, is a preſumptuous ſtruggle againſt every dictate of wiſdom. O, my young friends, how long ſhall the mercy revealed in GOD's word, and the audible language of his providence, call after you in vain? Will you never hear? Will you never feel? Will you never return unto the LORD your GOD? Come, repent, turn you from your evil ways. Embrace the LORD JESUS CHRIST. You are dying, one after the other; and I ſhall ſoon be called to give up my account, whether I have been faithful to your ſouls, or not. And I call you to record, this day, that, if you die eternally, I am clear from your blood. For I have not ſhunned to declare to you the whole counſel of GOD. May the LORD give you, and give us all, an underſtanding heart, to hear his voice, and walk in his paths, and his ſhall be the glory forever.———AMEN.